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A

True and Faithful

NARRATIVE

OF

The late Barbarous Cruelties and hard Usages, exercised by the *French* against

PROTESTANTS

AT

ROCHEL,

AFTER

Their Meeting at the Market-Place there ; By Order of the *Intendant* of that Province.

As it was faithfully related, by a Person of good Credit, that has made made his Escape from thence, and Arrived at *London* on the 24th of *September* last.

THis saying of our Blessed Lord, *In the World you shall have Tribulation, but be of good Chear, I have overcome the World*, was never more seasonable to be meditated on, then in these latter times, when Wickedness is so great, and Malice so mischievous; that such as profess the Truth of his Gospel, are thereby exposed to all the Miseries and Calamities that Hell can Assault them with. There is no Torment, nor no Cruelty which the *Church of God* has not undergone, since she hath repurged and cast out of her Communion the Errors of *Rome*; so as they may very well say, as in the 44th *Psalm*, *For thy sake (O Lord) we are killed all the day long; were counted as Sheep for the Slaughter.*

I will not undertake here, to describe by particulars, all those Torments which the People of God have always suffer'd, and which have been as many and various as their Adversaries Rage was fiery against them; seeing that this has been already discoursed at large, by several impartial Men, whose Religious purposes therein, was to shew the World that the *Compassions of Rome are Cruel.* But my Design in this Paper is, to give a true and sincere Account of a late Persecution exer-

cis'd againſt the *Proteſtants* of *Rochel*, by the *Intendant* there; by whoſe order they being aſſembled in the Market-place of that Town, about the beginning of this inſtant *September* 1681, he made them ſeveral queſtions concerning their Religion, and told them that the intention of His Majeſty (by whoſe Special command he had call'd them thether) was, that all his Subjects ſhould be *Catholicks*, and that none of 'em ſhould profeſs the Hereſy of *Calvin*, which was but a new Opinion contrary to the Principles of the ancient *Catholick* Faith, and moſt prejudicial both to the intreſt of his Crown and welfare of his People.

Therefore he adviſed (and would abſolutely have) them to convert themſelves and return to the Boſome of the Church, from which they were gone aſtray, ; intimating that this would be of a great advantage to them, and that they could not fail of bettering their condition hereby; for His Majeſty intended to make them a conſiderable abatement of the Taxes and Subſidies they did now pay, and to admit them into Places of Truſt and Honour (as his *Catholick* Subject) which their Religion had been all this while a bar to their being prefer'd to. But if they would not turn, they might expect to receive ſuch puniſhments as his Majeſty or his Officer ſhould think fit, to inflict upon them for their Rebellion and obſtinacy. To which diſcourſe theſe poor diſtreſſed *Proteſtants* giving no anſwer, and holding their peace as the People of *Judah* did to *Rab-ſhakeh's* Blaſphemous words, the *Intendant* told them that if within three hours time they did not come to a final reſolution, ſo as to give a poſitive anſwer to the propoſition that was made to them, they ſhould be held guilty of contumacy, and proceeded againſt according to Law. Whereupon they unanimouſly and with a *Chriſtian-like* courage replied that they would die in that Religion wherein they were Born and brought up, and hoped that his Majeſty would be ſo gracious to them as to let 'em peacefully follow the ſame according to the dictates of their own Conſciences ſince this Religion of theirs was ſo far from being deſtructive to his Majeſties Government, that it did teach them to bear an awful obedience to it, and to promote the Peace and welfare of the ſame; which they always did, and would ſtill endeavour to do as much as in them lay, with a deep ſubmiſſion to his Laws as being his moſt faithful Subjects.

At this diſcourſe the *Intendant* fell into a great paſſion; and ſending them to their ſeveral homes told them with anger, that ſince they ſo little ſenſible of their own good, as not to anſwer the Kings deſires, as he might juſtly expect, and accept of his gracious profers to them with a dutiful thankfulneſs to his Majeſty for the ſame, they ſhould ſee within a ſmall time what ſhovld be the reward of their diſobedience to his Orders, and ſlighting of his Royal Bounty. But notwithſtanding all this ſpecious and threatning Speech of the *Intendants* they perſiſted ſtill in their former purpoſe and reſolution of being conſtant to the true Religion, and anſwer'd him, that as no promiſe of reward could work upon him ſo as to engage them to imbrace a Religion which they knew to be contrary to the Goſpel,

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ſo no threat of puniſhment could ever make them depart from that, which they were ſatisfied did entirely agree with it. Here the *Intendant* left them, and declined urging them any further by wors; Bnt bethought himſelf of anotherway to try whether he could win them; which was to make good his promiſe of intreating them very ſeverely. He therefore ſent preſently into every of theſe Families, a conſiderable number of Blood-thirſty Souldiers, with order of living there *at diſcretion* (as they call it) and doing all the miſchief they could. Which unjuſt and cruel order they did not fail of executing very punctually, and would have outdone it, if it had been poſſible for any helliſh envy and malice to go beyond the injuſtice of it; their profeſſion of Souldiers, with that of *Romaniſts*, making them breath out nothing but Deſtruction and ſlaughter. And their rage and barborouſneſs was ſuch as that they did not aim at taking away preſently theſe poor *Proteſtants* lives, but did make them to go through all the long and tedious tormemts their cruel heart could deviſe: For they did not content themſelves to make a havock of theſe poor Creatures houſes, & to abuſe them pittileſly; but violating all Laws, both of God and Nature, did pull Men, Women and Children out of thir houſes into the Streets, and drew them all along by the hair. Then taking them in again they bound them, ſcourged them, threw ſcalded hot water upon their naked bodies, put their feet into hot Oyle, cut their bodies all over eſpecially thoſe parts that are moſt ſenſitive, and did them ſeveral other cruelties, ſo as in *Nero's* time no more barbarous and inhuman uſages were ever heard of. And yet their fury and malice did not ſtop here and could not be ſatisfied till they had ſtarved ſome to death, and treatned others to do the ſame or worſe to them, if they would not abjure their Hereſy (as they call it.) ſo that ſome of a weaker ſpirit in the ſenſe of reſentment of the tormens they had already ſuffer'd, and apprehenſion of thoſe they were threatned with, for the future, not thinking themſelves capable of abiding the brunt of a ſecond aſſault, did turn indeed, and had amends made them for their loſſes, though not for their wounds.

But others of a firmer courage, and whoſe Principles are *to be faithful to the end as they may obtain the Crown of Life*, being ſtill conſtant to the truth they profeſs are dayly put on the rack, and ſo cruelly tortured that it would make the Chriſtian Readers heart bleed if there were words expreſſive enough to deſcribe throughly the inhumanity of this perſecution, which is ſo violent, that ſuch as are expoſed thereto endeavour every day to run away and leave their Eſtates behind them, to obey that Command of our *Saviour's*, *when you are perſecuted in one place fly into another*. But ſuch care is taken by the adverſaries, that none of the *Proteſtants* ſhould depart that Place, as there are but few that can make their eſcape and be ſo happy as he is, who has made me the relation of what I now give to the Publick, and who has been ſo lucky as to ſave himſelf out of the Tyranny of *Rome* and find an apportunity to come into theſe *Bleſſed* Countries where *Proteſtancy* flouriſhes and Charity abounds, and where ſo many of other poor diſtreſſed *Proteſtants* reſort from all

places where Perſecution is hot againſt them; who are ſo kindly welcomed and ſo carefully provided for here, that I can't (though I am not in that condition as to partake of this Publick Charity my ſelf) but expreſs (as I do in the Paper) my due acknowledgments for the ſame both to his *Britiſh* Majeſty and the whole *Engliſh* Nation, in regard that it is done to my fleſh and blood, that is, thoſe of my Religion and Country, who as they ought to be moſt ſenſible of the extraordinary favours they daily receive here in *England*, ſo do I not doubt but that in time they will endeavour to owne this their obligation, by all the moſt Faithfull Services they ſhall be capable. to retnrn to a *Prince* and a *Nation*, that are ſo bountiful to them; and J do further Perſwade my ſelf, that they will now joyne their prayers with mine, that God Almighty, the Father of all Mercies, and giver of all good Gifts may reward *Both* by bleſſing *them* with all Temporal Bleſsings in this life, and Eternal Felicity in that which is to come.

Which is the conſtant *Prayer* of

A Born French, but deſirous to dy *An Engliſh Proteſtant*,
P. L.

FINIS

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